

THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

66TH STREET AND YORK AVENUE
NEW YORK 21, N.Y.

January 11, 1951.

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
University of Wisconsin
Madison 6, Wisconsin

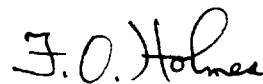
Dear Professor Lederberg:

Dr. Breed recently called to my attention your suggestion that certain experimental results in Journal of Bacteriology 20:15-23 seem to you contradictory to those cited in the Manual. On rereading the paper I was at first unable to find confirmation of this and am not yet sure that I know to what statements you refer. Finally, however, I noted that one statement in the Manual might be considered inaccurate. It should have read "when heated in the presence of spores" instead of "when heated in spores." Would this change in phraseology be satisfactory to you?

The statements in the Manual were intended to reflect particularly those findings expressed in the original paper by the following sentences. "Most of the criticisms directed against experiments which have apparently shown the 'spontaneous generation' of bacteriophage have stressed the fact that the original culture perhaps contained a minimum amount of the latent principle. By using spores heated at 90° C. for fifteen minutes, as was done in this case, any bacteriophage present was inactivated, and this criticism could be avoided."

Progress is perhaps being made to better advantage in delineating natural relationships between viruses causing diseases in plants and animals than among bacteriophages. New information is rapidly accumulating, however, and it is to be hoped that someone now working with bacteriophages may produce a revision of nomenclature for this group in the near future.

Sincerely yours,



F. O. Holmes.

CC: Prof. R. S. Breed

FOH:JR